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from G is that of the couplet (F 496-7) in which the poet is instructed to present the finished work to the queen. If G is the later version we can hardly doubt that she was dead when it was produced¹⁸; this saves Chaucer from the accusation of discourtesy and pettiness, which might otherwise seem to be implied by this omission, still more by that of the other passages, if we give them personal significance. Now when we remember the emotional eccentricity of Richard II, and his destruction of the manor of Shene¹⁹ directly after Anne's death there, is it surprising that Chaucer should have thought best to omit a reference to her as alive, "at Eltham or at Shene?" And does not this strongly suggest that the omission of the warm feeling earlier in the poem, otherwise unmotivated, was due to a desire to remove all suggestion of the queen, partly because it was out of place, now that she was dead, and partly in order to spare Richard's feelings? This will account also for the giving up of the suspense as to the identity of the lady in the ballad and elsewhere, one of the chief artistic sacrifices in G; and also, perhaps, for the general reduction in the prominence of the daisy,²⁰ since its representation of a real person had become usual in this class of poetry. If Chaucer's chief motive for revision was unæsthetic and somewhat recondite, does not this account for the fact that the revised version has been so difficult to distinguish? The fact that the orthodox view as to an identification in some sort of Alcestis and the daisy with Queen Anne so well explains some of the chief cruxes in G will be admitted to be a considerable argument in its favor. And before this explanation, if it shall be thought reasonable, will vanish the lingering feeling that after all F may be the later version.²¹

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¹⁸ She died 7th June, 1394. French utterly ignores this possibility (pp. 13, 15, 21).

¹⁹ See, e. g., *Dict. of Nat. Biogr.*, XLVIII, p. 150, and I, 422-3; cf. Lowes, 671, n. 4.

²⁰ E. g., in G 234, 247; see French, pp. 94, 52, 85.

²¹ Since the writing of this criticism Professor Lowes himself has published one (*Publ. of the Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, xx, 749-751); the two deal with different points, but agree in essence.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHAUCER'S *Vitremyte*.

To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes:

SIRS:—In the *Monk's Tale* (B, 3560-2) Chaucer says of Zenobia:

"And she that helmed was in starke stoures,
And wan by force tounes stronge and toures,
Shal on hir heed now were a vitremyte."

In the *Troilus* there are two phrases similar to this last (II. 867, v. 469). Skeat, in a long note on the passage in the *Monk's Tale*, tentatively suggests that Chaucer is referring "to a proverb, probably rather English than foreign," in which a glass cap or helmet figures as a symbol of insecurity; but he knows of no such proverb. We may recall our own proverb as to glass houses. But here follows better confirmation of Skeat's suggestion, except as regards the nationality of the saying.

In Boccaccio's *De Genealogia Deorum*, XIV. 18, the writer defends poetry from the charge of being demoralizing; the prophets and pontiffs have not forbidden the study of the poets, and therefore those who do forbid it seem to reflect on themselves. "Verum si hi imbeciles sunt atque tractabiles sibi caveant memores proverbii veteris quo prohibetur hos certamen lapidum non intrare quibus sit galea vitrea."¹ Chaucer may even have derived his phrases by memory from this work, for he seems to have used it in composing his *Legend of Hypermnestra* (Skeat, III. xl.).

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MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes.

SIRS:—Perhaps the following miscellaneous jottings, if not too trivial, may find a place in the *Notes*:

I.

1. Among the *Grabschriften* of Michael Moscherosch one comes upon:

Hier lieg ich Hanss Schlickebrod
Und bitt dich lieber Herre Gott,
Das ewig Leben wolst geben mir;
Wie ich wolt haben geben dir,